

# Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

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# Message from the Director

By Eric Raff



“What are they saying?” or “What’s so funny?” I used to ask my parents or sister. Growing up, when watching a TV program, it took a lot of guesswork to figure out the story or jokes. “Wait until a commercial” was the common reply. I had to wait for the explanation before getting the short version. Over the years, I enjoyed action movies or cartoons and avoided programs with a lot of talking. However, it wasn’t until 1980 when I first saw closed captioning (cc) as a teenager.

My mother bought the first model of a close captioned decoder, a bulky box, available only at Sears at the time. She explained that I would be able to read the words on the TV screen. Only ABC and PBS had cc programs on at the time. She called the local news to come to our home for a demonstration. The decoder on top of the television was hooked up but to my dismay, I wasn’t receiving captioning on “Three’s Company” a comedy. I was anxious to understand why my family thought it was so funny. Instead all I could find was an obscure PBS educational program. The reporter asked me how I enjoyed the show. Given the circumstance, my lame reply, “I thought it was boring.”

I didn’t realize it at the time but doors were opening for me. I no longer had to rely on guesswork or family to tell me what’s going on. As cc programs expanded and cc improved, I had more choices and eventually enjoyed some PBS educational programs! I would no longer watch the TV program if it didn’t have closed captions. Occasionally, I’d see an old TV program or movie I had seen as a kid without cc but as an adult seeing it with cc for the first time; I began to realize what I had been missing all those years.

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External decoders went through three model generations before it finally became a little chip built into the TV itself as required by law for all TVs built in 1993 or later. I had bought a 1992 JVC 27 inch screen TV using a 2nd generation box decoder. My TV lasted all these years until September 2008 when it finally died 16 years later. The still working decoder is now in storage. It was time to buy one of those new High Definition (HD) TVs with a built-in cc decoder.

A colleague reminded me that consumers were facing captioning problems with digital television and programming and DVD players. And there was the broadcasting digital transition, currently postponed to June 2009. I decided to do a lot of research into this before buying a HDTV. From my research, I've come to the unfortunate conclusion that closed captioning in a digital world is much more complicated than the analog world! I fear I only scratched the surface of the complexities and challenges many more deaf and hard of hearing people will be facing. It seems we are taking steps backwards in a digital world in spite of the progress we've made with captioning.

You must educate yourself, via research on the internet, and complain depending on the source of the problem ~ to broadcasters, cable or satellite companies, equipment manufacturers, and finally the FCC! Don't complain to ODHH, it is outside of our area of expertise other than to provide resources (see list of [www links](#)). And you must become a self-advocate, get involved with one of the organizations belonging to Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT) and write to your U.S. congressional representatives. It takes a collection of individual efforts to get changes made on a national level. Otherwise, I fear the day I'd be asking once again, "What are they saying?" or "What's so funny?"

## Resources to Digital TV Transition, HDTV, DVD and Captioning Issues

### Communication Services for the Deaf

<http://dtv.c-s-d.org/> (ASL & captioned videos)

### Department of Commerce

<https://www.dtv2009.gov/>

### National Center for Accessible Media

<http://ncam.wgbh.org/dtv/>

<http://ncam.wgbh.org/dtv/>

### National Captioning Institute

[http://www.ncicap.org/DTV\\_FAQ1.asp](http://www.ncicap.org/DTV_FAQ1.asp)

### Federal Communication Commission

<http://www.dtv.gov/>

[http://www.dtv.gov/video\\_audio.html](http://www.dtv.gov/video_audio.html)

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/digitaltv.html>

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/caption.html>

[http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/tips\\_on\\_filing\\_cc\\_complaint.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/tips_on_filing_cc_complaint.html)

### Consumer Electronics Association

[http://www.ce.org/PDF/CEA\\_Closed\\_Caption\\_FAQs\\_April\\_2007.pdf](http://www.ce.org/PDF/CEA_Closed_Caption_FAQs_April_2007.pdf)

### High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI)

<http://www.hdmi.org/learningcenter/kb.aspx?c=1#117>

### Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology

<http://www.coataccess.org/>

## **Save the Date**

What: Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)  
Town Hall Meeting

When: Saturday, May 30, 2009

Time: 1 pm to 4 pm

Where: Eastern Washington Center for the Deaf and Hard  
of Hearing (EWCDHH)  
1206 North Howard Street  
Spokane, WA 99201

More information about the ODHH Town Hall Meeting will  
be posted through the email distribution and ODHH website.

## **First Edition of the Directory of Services for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind**

### **Is Now Available!**

ODHH is pleased to announce that our first newest edition of the Directory of Services for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind is now available in print and on ODHH website.

We have Directory of Services books in regular print.

You can download the Directory of Services from the ODHH website. We have three different formats to meet your reading preferences. The formats are:

- Regular Print in PDF
- Large Print in PDF
- Large Print in MS Word

To request a copy of the Directory of Services or provide agency information updates, please contact Ryan Bondroff at:

(800) 422-7930 Voice/TTY  
(360) 339-7382 VP200.  
bondroffryan@dshs.wa.gov  
odhh@dshs.wa.gov

Note: We will update the Directory of Services every two years. You can always check the resources page of the ODHH website for updates.

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## **Welcome New Staff Member: Pat Moed**

I am excited to join the team here at the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH). I came on board in this past March as program assistant for three ODHH programs: Information, Referral and Advocacy (IRA), Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM) and Social and Human Services (SHS). I completed my B.A. in Human Services at Western Washington University. My position at ODHH draws on my educational background as well as my professional experience in social services, office administration, and interpreting. I am enjoying learning about my new job and the services we provide to the public.

Outside of work, you will always find me busy with something! My favorite activities are hiking, cycling, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, geocaching, rockhounding, photographing fungi, and riding on the back of a motorcycle. I spend my quiet time quilting, reading, or digging in the garden. I have always had a deep interest in languages and cultures, and have traveled widely. Nowadays, I mostly explore local Northwest places and visit friends and family in Canada, where I grew up. I have two wonderful sons; one is currently in his second year of pre-med studies, and the other has one more year of high school left.

I value time spent with my boys, family, and friends, and I look forward to getting to know my colleagues at ODHH. I appreciate their warm welcome and am eager to work with each and every one of them.



# Telemarketers and VideoPhone Local Numbers

*By Steve Peck, TRS Program Manager*

Has your dinner or evening quiet time been interrupted by Videophone (VP) calls from telemarketers?

If so, you're not alone.

Some of you may have answered strange VP calls only to find that the person calling was a telemarketer or a wrong number call. While you were gone your VP may have produced a list of unknown numbers on your VP missed call list. Do you wonder why you have received some strange calls? The answer may be that telemarketers somehow obtained your VP Local Number (LN). We have decided to share some research with our readers on how to prevent telemarketing calls from coming through to your VP LN.

Effective December 1, 2008, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ordered Video Relay Service (VRS) providers to implement a 10-digit videophone (VP) local number (LN) system for VRS users. Many VRS users have chosen a default VRS provider and were issued a new VP LN. As a result, some users may have experienced unsolicited calls at their new VP LN. Now that you have a new VP LN, what can you do if you do not want unsolicited calls coming to your VP?

In 1991, Congress passed the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) in response to consumer concerns about the growing number of unsolicited telephone marketing calls and increased use of automated and prerecorded messages. With the TCPA in place, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) established rules that require telemarketing agents or business entities to:

- Provide the name of the person calling,
- Provide the name of person or entity on behalf of whom the call is being placed, and
- Provide the telephone number or address at which the person or entity can be contacted.



The FCC rules also prohibit telemarketers from calling homes before 8 am and after 9 pm. In June 2003, the FCC supplemented the original rules and, together with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), established a national Do-Not-Call list. In February 2008, the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act was passed into law, making the registration of numbers a one-time requirement.

The FCC has a free service called the National Do-Not-Call List that allows you to block unsolicited calls to your VP LN from telemarketers. To add your VP LN, mobile and home phone numbers to the National Do-Not-Call list, go to [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov), or call the voice or TTY number listed below. It takes 31 days from the date that you register your VP LN and other numbers for telemarketers to stop calling you. Your number will remain on the list indefinitely until you choose to remove your number(s) from the list. Telemarketers must honor your do-not-call request. If they do call you after the 31 day period, you may file a complaint and, if proven guilty, they may be subject to a fine of up to \$11,000.

Please understand that registering your VP LN on the National Do-Not-Call Registry will stop all telemarketing calls. However, there are a few exceptions. These exemptions may include companies calling you after you have purchased their goods and services, and/or you participated in a political or charity solicitation. Please also note that the registration does not prevent unlawful prank or harassment calls. If you get those calls, you are encouraged to contact your local law enforcement agency.

More than 157 million numbers are on the Do-Not-Call Registry. Add yours today for FREE!

Register Your Numbers:

Online:

[www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)

Do-Not-Call Helpline:

1-(888) 382-1222

1-(866) 290-4236 TTY

*(continued on next page)*

### More Information:

The FCC has fact sheets that will help you with telemarketers and automated systems, resources for VP users, including how to get a home, mobile, or VP LN listed on the Do-Not-Call Registry, and how to file a complaint.

### Visit the FCC Online!

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumers.html>

### Unwanted Telephone Marketing Calls:

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/tcpa.html>

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## **Services Available with the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library**

The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL), part of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), provides reading materials to any Washington State resident who cannot read standard print, hold a book, or turn a page. For example, we serve anyone with low or no vision or who can't use traditional print materials because of a sensory or physical disability or disabling condition (such as Parkinson's disease or Multiple Sclerosis), as well as those with organic learning disabilities. There is no charge for our service, and patrons return books through the mail without paying postage.

Though we have been a library since 1906, many people don't know exactly what we provide, or how to get service from us. We have books for adults, teens and children, fiction and non-fiction (including bestsellers), and popular magazines, available in braille and cassette. We also have a vast large print book collection and a 24-hour radio reading service. To get materials from us, a patron fills out a brief application to certify his or her eligibility for service, and we send the requested materials directly to the patron's residence.

WTBBL has a great deal to offer the deaf-blind and the deaf-low vision communities. We have extensive braille, web-braille, and large print collections. The braille collection has over 15,000 titles in book form and thousands of titles for download via web-braille. Our large print collection has over 16,000 titles, including mysteries, westerns, and romance. You can find the titles by using our online catalog at <http://www.klas.com/wtbbl> or by using the “order books and materials” link from [www.wtbbl.org](http://www.wtbbl.org). If you are hard of hearing, we also provide books on cassette and soon in a digital format, both of which can be amplified for easier listening. When you sign up for service, we send you a machine to play the books and you at that time you can also apply for an amplifier. WTBBL currently has over 55,000 titles on cassette and there are already 13,000 digital audio books available for download through NLS if you are a patron of the WTBBL and have access to a computer with high-speed internet and an approved commercial player.

Even among other NLS talking book libraries, WTBBL stands apart for its wide-ranging services for our patrons. One way in particular is that we produce many of our own books in braille and audio format. The Braille Department, with the help of over 40 volunteers, produces 40 plus titles a year that are by Northwest authors or with Northwest interest. The Audio Book Production Department, with the help of over 70 volunteers, produces about 250 books a year, also with local, Pacific Northwest interest. We also welcome suggestions from patrons in order to supplement the collection we received from NLS.

If you aren't already a patron of the library, please consider signing up and giving us a try. WTBBL is physically located in Seattle at 2021 9th Avenue, but we mail books in all formats all over the state of Washington. For more information about WTBBL and our services, please visit [www.wtbbl.org](http://www.wtbbl.org). You can also contact us at 1-800-542-0866, 206-615-0400, TTY 206-615-0418, or via email at [wtbbl@sectate.wa.gov](mailto:wtbbl@sectate.wa.gov).

# **Information on Reporting Child/Adult Abuse and Neglect**

**Mandatory Reporters Make The Call!**

Report abuse and neglect involving children

Mandatory reporters call directly to the appropriate local office.  
You are encouraged to look on the Internet for information about reporting child abuse in Washington State at: [www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca)

Statewide after normal business hours, weekends and holidays:  
1-800-562-5624  
(Answered by DSHS employees, 24/7)

Call this toll-free number if you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected. The operator will connect you with the right DSHS office to make your report.

DSHS TOLL FREE 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276)  
Washington State Department of Social & Health Services

If you're calling about a crime, physical or sexual abuse or an immediate life-threatening emergency, dial 911.

For more information about reporting abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, visit the DSHS web site at: [www1.dshs.wa.gov/](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/)

**RCW 26.44.050**

A law enforcement officer may take, or cause to be taken, a child into custody without a court order if there is probable cause to believe that the child is abused or neglected and that the child would be injured or could not be taken into custody if it were necessary to first obtain a court order pursuant to RCW 13.34.050.

# Child Abuse & Neglect in Washington State

## KNOW THE SIGNS

Unexplained injuries (bruises, burns, welts)

Difficulty sitting or walking

Unusual sexual knowledge/behavior

Abandonment

Fear of a caregiver

Shrinks from approaching adults

Afraid to go home

Unexplained absences

Unexplained lags in physical development

Failure to provide basic needs

Begs/steals food or money

Sudden behavior changes

Poor hygiene

For more signs, visit our website at:

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/safety/abuseWhat.asp>

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## Navigating DSHS

During the challenging economic times, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is available to provide programs and services to meet the basic needs of Washingtonians. To learn more about DSHS programs and services, please visit Navigating DSHS at:

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/Publications/22-1199.pdf>

It's also available in Spanish at:

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ForeignLang/22-1199SP.pdf>

You can also access to DSHS website for more information at [www.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.dshs.wa.gov).

# Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

**Toll Free: 1 (800) 422-7930 V/TTY**

**(360) 902-8000 V/TTY**

**Website: <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>**

**Contact ODHH by VideoPhone (VP) at:**

**VP: 65.246.110**

**VP200: (360) 339-7382**

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Free Matter  
for the Blind  
and Physically  
Handicapped